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# Modern Philology

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## CHAUCER'S DARES

### I. FRIGII DARETIS YLIAS

When in the *House of Fame* Chaucer turns his eyes from the "feminyne creature" who capriciously awards to men their meed of praise or blame, he sees on either side of her dais a series of metal pillars on which stand the great writers of the past who, by their writings, have helped to perpetuate fame. First among pagan writers stands the "Tholosan that highte Stace,"

And by him stood, withouten lees,  
Ful wonder hye on a pileer  
Of yren, he, the gret Omeer;  
And with him Dares and Tytus [i.e., Dictys]  
Before, and eek he, Lollius,  
And Guido eek de Columpnis,  
And English Gaufride eek, ywis;  
And ech of these, as have I joye,  
Was besy for to bere up Troye.

[*Fame*, 1464-72.]

Of these "bearers-up of Troy" it is the second in the list, Dares, who concerns us at present. Dares, mentioned by Homer (*Iliad* v. 9) as a priest of Hephaestus, is the reputed author of an "eyewitness" history of the Trojan War written in Greek. An utterly uninspired work which bears the title *Daretis Phrygii de Excidio Troiae Historia* purports to be a Latin translation of this Greek work made by Cornelius Nepos.<sup>1</sup> To this twice-spurious history Chaucer is apparently

<sup>1</sup> The most available text is the Teubner edition, edited by F. Meister, Leipzig, 1873.

alluding in the lines just quoted; but nothing in the *House of Fame* indicates that Chaucer's knowledge of the work was any more intimate than was his knowledge of Homer.<sup>1</sup>

In the *Book of the Duchess* there is another mention of Dares:

And therfor was he [Achilles] slayn also  
In a temple, for bothe two  
Were slayn, he and Antilegius,  
And so seyth Dares Frigius,  
For love of Polixena.

[1067-71.]

The death of Achilles and Antilochus is, indeed, narrated in chap. 34 of Dares; but the episode is given at much greater length by Benoit (21838-22334),<sup>2</sup> and by Guido (sig. l 3, verso, col. 2);<sup>3</sup> hence we can have no assurance that Chaucer actually read it in Dares.

Near the beginning of *Troilus* (I, 146), Dares is mentioned with Homer and Dictys as a writer of "Troyane gestes," where the curious may read "how this toun com to destruccioun"; but in this vague reference Chaucer may merely be echoing the frequent citation of these names by Benoit and Guido.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, at the very end of *Troilus*, we find the following stanza:

And if I hadde ytaken for to wryte  
The armes of this ilke worthy man,  
Than wolde I of his batailles endyte.  
But for that I to wryte first bigan  
Of his love, I have seyde as that I can.  
His worthy dedes, whoso list hem here,  
Reed Dares, he can telle hem alle yfere.

[V, 1765-71.]

Of this passage Professor Lounsbury says:

In the brief and meager narrative of that writer [Dares] the inquirer would find little to reward his search. He would learn, indeed, that Troilus was a great leader; that on several occasions he put the Greeks to flight,

<sup>1</sup> Ll. 1475-80 of the *House of Fame* are to be explained as an echo of Benoit, 45-70, 110-16, rather than of the preface of Dares, which says nothing of Homer's partiality for the Greek side.

<sup>2</sup> For Benoit I have used the edition of L. Constans, Paris, 1904-9.

<sup>3</sup> For Guido I have used the Strasbourg edition of 1489.

<sup>4</sup> See Karl Young, *Origin and Development of the Story of Troilus and Criseyde*, Chaucer Society, 1908, pp. 129, 130. To the third chapter of Professor Young's book I am indebted for several of the references cited in this article.

drove back the myrmidons, wounded Diomede, Agamemnon, and even Achilles, and was at last only slain when taken at great disadvantage. But these details occupy hardly any more space in the history of Dares than they do in the account just given. It was in Guido da Colonna's work that Chaucer found the martial deeds of Troilus recounted in full. . . . While he was speaking of Dares, he was thinking of the 'Trojan History' of the Sicilian physician which professes to have been itself derived from the work of the Phrygian soldier.<sup>1</sup>

More recent opinion would substitute the name of Benoit for that of Guido, but would otherwise agree with Professor Lounsbury. Professor Karl Young states the generally accepted opinion when he says: "There is no proof that Chaucer reverted for materials to the *De Excidio Trojae Historia* of Dares Phrygius."<sup>2</sup>

But the brief and meager narrative of the *De Excidio* was not the only work accessible to the mediaeval reader which went under the name of Dares Phrygius. During the ninth decade of the twelfth century an Englishman, known from his birthplace as Joseph of Exeter, in Latin, Josephus Iscanus or Josephus Exoniensis, produced a paraphrase, or better an elaboration, of the prose Dares in Latin hexameters of no slight degree of merit, to which modern editors have given the title *De Bello Trojano*. The poem, which is neither brief nor meager, is in six books, and reaches the not inconsiderable total of 3,645 lines.<sup>3</sup>

Of Joseph's poem three manuscripts are known to exist: (1) Westminster Abbey, Chapter Library, No. 18; (2) Bodleian, Digby 157; (3) Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, 15015.<sup>4</sup> Of these manuscripts I

<sup>1</sup> *Studies in Chaucer*, II, 315. Professor Lounsbury holds, however, that the reference in *Legend of Good Women*, 1457, to the "Argonauticon" is due to chap. i of Dares. This seems more than doubtful. On the whole matter of Chaucer and Dares see Bech, *Anglia*, V, 325, 326.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 106, n. 2.

<sup>3</sup> The most available modern edition of the poem is in Valpy's reissue of the Delphin Classics, *Scriptores Latini in Usum Delphini*, London, 1825, where it is included in one volume with Dictys Cretensis and Dares Phrygius, or the original Delphin edition of 1702 (Amsterdam). The first book, edited from the Paris MS, is printed by J. J. Jusserand in his thesis *De Josepho Exoniensi vel Iscano*, Paris, 1877. For a list of earlier editions see *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, s.v. "Joseph of Exeter." In the *editio princeps* of 1558 (Basle) it bears the title "Daretis Phrygii . . . de Bello Trojano . . . libri sex a Cornelio Nepote in Latinum conversi." It continued to pass under the name of Cornelius Nepos until 1620, when Samuel Dresemius restored it to its rightful author. None of the editions, except Jusserand's, is at all satisfactory.

<sup>4</sup> According to Jusserand, *op. cit.*, p. 91, the Paris MS is defective: "Deficient carminis sextus liber majorque pars quinti libri." In modern accounts of Joseph, including that of Jusserand, there is said to be a fourth manuscript of the work in the library

have personally examined the first two. They are beautifully written in thirteenth-century hands. Neither has a title; but the colophon of the Westminster MS reads "Frigii daretis yliados liber sextus explicit," and that of the Bodleian MS, "Explicit liber Frigii Daretis." I was prevented by the outbreak of the European war from examining, as I had intended to do, the manuscript at Paris. According to M. Jusserand, it also is in a thirteenth-century hand,<sup>1</sup> and bears the title "Frigii daretis yliados liber primus incipit."<sup>2</sup>

It is to be particularly noted that in none of the three extant known manuscripts, all of which antedate Chaucer's lifetime, is there anything to denote the authorship of Joseph of Exeter. Had any one of these three manuscripts fallen into Chaucer's hands, he would have been fully justified in referring to it as "Dares Frigius." A careful reading, to be sure, would have shown him that in the opening lines of the poem the author addresses an archbishop of Canterbury, third in succession from St. Thomas, who is no other than Archbishop Baldwin, a fellow-townsmen of Joseph, who was archbishop from 1185 till his death in 1190.<sup>3</sup> At the end of Book III he might have read:

Sic Britonum ridenda fides, et credulus error  
Arturum expectat, expectabitque perenne.

of Magdalen College, Oxford. This is an error. MS 50 of the Magdalen College Library, specifically cited in *DNB*, contains a copy of the *prose* Dares. In regard to this non-existent Magdalen MS, Mr. H. A. Wilson, librarian of Magdalen College, very kindly wrote me, under date of October 17, 1914, as follows: "The evidence that we *had* such a MS is, I think, entirely dependent on Leland, who says that he saw in our library 'libellum carmine scriptum, cum hoc titulo, Dares Phrygius de Bello Trojano.' He describes the MS as 'imperfectum, et tantum non obliteratum.' It was therefore probably a fragment only, and in such condition as might well have led to its being thrown aside when our MSS were being put in order at a later time. He goes on to say that he afterwards found elsewhere some other MSS of the same work, and was able to identify it as the poem, based on Dares Phrygius, of Joseph of Exeter. What he says about the work is printed *in extenso* by Tanner, who seems to add nothing of his own.

"Bale's *Index Britanniae Scriptorum*, edited by Dr. R. L. Poole, contains the statement that 'Josephus Deuonius' (i.e., Joseph of Exeter) 'carmina scripsit in Daretem Phrygium de bello Trojano' (p. 277). Bale gives as the sources of his knowledge 'Ex Collegio Magdalenae' and 'ex Officina Toye.' Dr. Poole, in his note, gives a reference to our MS 50, and to Coxe's Catalogue. But the work contained in MS 50 (bound up with Solinus) is *not* in verse; nor does its *title* contain the name of Dares Phrygius; it is also in good condition; and it is quite clear that it cannot be the MS which Leland saw. It is the Latin *prose* version or abridgement of Dares Phrygius. . . . I am afraid that there is no doubt that the fragment seen by Leland has disappeared."

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 91.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 101.

<sup>3</sup> See *DNB*, s.v. "Baldwin."

At the end of Book V is a passage, omitted in the printed editions, which refers to "Tertius Henricus noster,"<sup>1</sup> whom M. Jusserand clearly identifies as the eldest son of Henry II, crowned in advance at his father's wish in 1170, who died in 1183, while Henry II was still alive. A careful reader, then, might have inferred that the bulk of the poem was composed between 1170 and 1183, but that its opening address to Archbishop Baldwin was written after 1185.<sup>2</sup> But even this careful reader, which Chaucer very likely was not, would, in default of any other title, refer to the work as "Dares Frigius."

Joseph's poem is, indeed, a poetical elaboration of the prose Dares, the general scheme of which it follows. Book I tells of Jason and the Golden Fleece, and of the first destruction of Troy under King Laomedon. Book II narrates Priam's attempt to recover the captive Hesione, and, in great detail, the judgment of Paris. Book III contains the rape of Helen. Book IV draws the portraits of individual Trojans and Greeks, and recounts the hostile preparations of the latter. Book V contains the battles before Troy up to the death of Hector. Book VI contains the later battles, the deaths of Troilus and Achilles, the destruction of the city, and the return of the Greeks. As in the prose Dares, Troilus is, next to Hector, the leading figure among the Trojan warriors; but there is no suggestion of his love for Briseis. Of Briseis we are given a portrait in seven lines (IV, 156-62); but she is not elsewhere mentioned. What sources, other than the prose Dares, Joseph used, has not been satisfactorily determined. There is no reason to think that he used Benoit de Ste. Maure.<sup>3</sup> His style, which, despite a much too ingenious rhetoric, is not without elements of true poetry, is modeled on Statius and Claudian, with not infrequent echoes of Virgil and Ovid.

That Chaucer knew and used this "Frigii Daretis *Ylias*," a fact not hitherto suspected, I shall show in the following pages. As Professor Karl Young has said, there is no proof that Chaucer ever drew upon the prose Dares. In view of these facts, it seems a not

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by M. Jusserand, p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> On Joseph of Exeter and his works, and for the grounds on which the poem on the Trojan War is attributed to him, see the work of Jusserand already cited, and A. Saradin, *De Josepho Iscano*, Versailles, 1878, the latter of no great value.

<sup>3</sup> According to Constans, *op. cit.*, VI, 190, the *Roman de Troie* was composed between the years 1155 and 1160.

unreasonable inference that, when Chaucer bids the reader turn to "Dares" for an account of Troilus' "worthy dedes,"<sup>1</sup> the book he has in mind is the *Iliad* of Josephus Iscanus. There, indeed, "the armes of this ilke worthy man" are told "alle yfere" with much heroic rhetoric.<sup>2</sup> There is at least implied in Chaucer's stanza the idea that "Dares" confines himself to the battles of Troilus to the neglect of his love. This is true of Joseph's poem; Benoit and Guido give us both.

If Chaucer already knew Joseph of Exeter's poem at the time when he wrote the *Book of the Duchess*, he could have found there, in lines 402-61 of Book VI, an account of the death of Achilles and of Antilochus. The reference in the *House of Fame* and that in Book I of *Troilus* are too vague to yield any conclusions; but there is no reason why here also he may not have had the Exonian "Dares" in mind.

## II. CHAUCER'S TROJAN PORTRAITS

In the fifth book of *Troilus* Chaucer interrupts his account of Diomedes and his wooing of the false Criseyde to introduce, somewhat irrelevantly, six stanzas which draw for us portraits of Diomedes, of Criseyde, and of Troilus.

In the earlier books, to be sure, we find descriptions, somewhat less formal in character, of Troilus and of Criseyde. We are told of Criseyde's angelic beauty (I, 102, 171-75), of her widow's dress (I, 109, 170), of her "ful assured loking and manere" (I, 182), and at greater length we read:

She nas not with the leste of hir stature,  
But alle hir limes so wel answeringe  
Weren to womanhode, that creature  
Was never lasse mannish in seminge.  
And eek the pure wyse of here meninge  
Shewede wel, that men might in hir gesse  
Honour, estat, and wommanly noblesse.

[I, 281-87.]<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Troilus*, V, 1770. As we shall see, Chaucer makes use of Joseph's poem in the fifth book of *Troilus*.

<sup>2</sup> E.g., V, 415-22; VI, 185-340.

<sup>3</sup> This corresponds to *Filostrato*, I, 27:

Ell' era grande, ed alla sua grandezza  
Rispondean bene i membri tutti quanti;  
Il viso aveva adorno di bellezza  
Celestiale, e nelli suoi sembianti  
Ivi mostrava una donnesca altezza.

She is fairer than Helen or Polyxena (I, 454, 455); Pandarus tells of her gracious and generous heart (I, 883-89); the beauty of her person is described (III, 1247-51); we hear of her "ounded heer, that sonnish was of hewe," and of her "fingres longe and smale" (IV, 736, 737); her face was "lyk of Paradys the image" (IV, 864).<sup>1</sup>

Troilus also is described. His manner was so goodly "that ech him lovede that loked on his face" (I, 1078); his virtues are enumerated (I, 1079-85); Pandarus describes him to Criseyde as—

The wyse worthy Ector the secounde,  
In whom that every vertu list abounde,  
As alle trouthe and alle gentillesse,  
Wysdom, honour, fredom, and worthinesse.  
[II, 158-61.]

We see him ride by on his return from battle (II, 624-51); and we are told that his happy love so increased his knightly virtues that he was "save Ector, most ydrad of any wight" (III, 1772-78).

Of a more formal character are the portraits in Book V. Of these portraits, save that of Diomedes, there is no trace in *Filostrato*; and critics have hitherto been at a loss to account for them. Of the portrait of Criseyde, Skeat says: "This description seems to be mainly Chaucer's own."<sup>2</sup> Hamilton<sup>3</sup> and Young<sup>4</sup> cite passages from Benoit and Guido, which, however, leave the most salient features unaccounted for. We must now consider these portraits in detail.

The first in order is that of Diomedes:

This Diomedes, as bokes us declare,  
Was in his nedes prest and corageous;  
With sterne voys and mighty limes square,  
Hardy, testif, strong, and chevalrous,  
Of dedes lyk his fader Tideus.  
And som men seyn he was of tunge large,  
And heir he was of Calidoine and Arge.  
[V, 799-805.]

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Filostrato*, IV, 100: "la sua faccia, fatta in paradiso."

<sup>2</sup> Oxford Chaucer, II, 498.

<sup>3</sup> G. L. Hamilton, *The Indebtedness of Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde to Guido delle Colonne's Historia Trojana*, New York, 1903, pp. 75, 76, 79, 81, 82, 115-18.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 108-13, 117, 118, 133.



When one turns first of all to the *Filostrato*, one finds Diomede described thus:

Egli era grande e bel della persona,  
Giovane fresco e piacevole assai,  
E forte e fier siccome si ragiona,  
E parlante quant' altro Greco mai  
E ad amor la natura aveva prona.

[VI, 33.]<sup>1</sup>

Boccaccio's "forte e fier" corresponds in a general way to Chaucer's "Hardy, testif"; and "parlante quant' alto Greco mai" is clearly the source of the phrase "of tunge large." For the last line of Chaucer's stanza one must turn to another passage in *Filostrato*:

Se'l padre mio Tideo fosse vissuto,  
Com' el fu morto a Tebe combattendo;  
Di Calidonia e d'Argo saria suto  
Re, siccom' io ancora essere intendo.

[VI, 24.]

It will be noticed that the two specific statements in Chaucer's description which are directly due to Boccaccio are in the last two lines, and are introduced by the phrase, "And som men seyn." The "som men," therefore, reduce themselves to Boccaccio.

What, then, are the "bokes" on the strength of whose "declaration" are based the remaining elements of the portrait? As the fount and source of such a Trojan portrait one will consult first the prose Dares, whose descriptions of the Greek and Trojan personages were later elaborated by Benoit and Guido.<sup>2</sup> The prose Dares says of Diomede:

Diomedem *fortem, quadratum, corpore honesto, vultu austero, in bello acerrimum, clamosum, cerebro calido, impatientem, audacem.* [Cap. 13.]

In Benoit this is expanded into the following lines:

Forz refu mout Diomedès,  
Gros e quarrez e granz adès;  
La chiere aveit mout felenesse:

<sup>1</sup> The Paris edition of 1789 reads:

Era Diomede bello di persona,  
Giovine, grande, piacevole assai,  
E forte e fiero (come Omer ragiona).  
[VIII, 33.]

<sup>2</sup> For the remoter history of these portraits see J. Furst, "Die Personalbeschreibungen im Diktysberichte," *Philologus*, LXI (1902), 374-440.

Cist fist mainte fausse pramesse.  
 Mout fu *hardiz*, mout fu *noisos*,  
 E mout fu d' armes engeignos;  
 Mout fu estouz e sorparlez,  
 E mout par fu sis cors dotez.  
 A grant peine poëit trover  
 Qui contre lui vousist ester:  
 Rien nel poëit en pais tenir,  
 Trop par esteit maus a servir;  
 Mais por amor traist mainte feiz  
 Maintes peines e mainz torneiz.

[5211-24.]

In Guido we find:

Diomedes fuit multa proceritate distensus, amplo pectore, robustis scapulis, aspectu ferox, in promissis fallax, in armis strennuus, victorie cupidus, timendus a multis, cum multum esset virtuosus, seruientium sibi nimis impatiens cum molestus seruientibus nimis esset, libidinosus quidem multum & qui permultas traxit angustias ob feruorem amoris. [Sig. e 2, recto, col. 1.]

These portraits, as drawn by Dares, Benoit, and Guido, agree in a general way with Chaucer's account of the square-set warrior, "hardy, testif, strong, and chevalrous." None of them, however, mentions his stern voice, nor compares his deeds with those of his father Tydeus. For these details we must turn to Chaucer's "Dares," Joseph of Exeter. Here we read:

DIOMEDES: *Voce ferox*, animo preceps, feruente cerebro,  
 Audentique ira, *ualidos quadratur in artus*  
 Titides, plenisque *meretur tidea factis*;  
 Sic animo, sic ore fero, sic fulminat armis.

[IV, 124-27.]<sup>1</sup>

Here we have the unmistakable source of the "sterne voys" and of the comparison with Tydeus; while Joseph's "*ualidos quadratur in artus*" is much closer to Chaucer's "mighty limes square" than is the "quadratum" of Dares or the "quarrez" of Benoit.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps, also, "animo preceps" furnished the suggestion for "in his nedes prest,"

<sup>1</sup> I quote from the Westminster MS. In 125 Digby reads *Ardentique*. The lines may be translated thus: "Fierce of voice, headlong in spirit, in fiery brain, and in daring wrath, stands squared in mighty limbs Tydides, and in full deeds is worthy of Tydeus; like him in spirit, like him in fierce speech, like him he thunders in arms."

<sup>2</sup> This trait is not reproduced by Guido.

and "feruente cerebro"<sup>1</sup> for "testif." For the word "chevalrous" Joseph has no equivalent; the source is apparently to be found in the last two lines of the portrait by Benoit, if any source be needed for so obvious an epithet.

Chaucer's portrait of Diomedes is, then, like so many other passages in his poetry, a composite of several sources. He drew first on the "bokes" of Joseph of Exeter and Benoit de Ste. Maure, and supplemented their statements from Boccaccio, marking his transition to the Italian source by the phrase, "And som men seyn."<sup>2</sup>

Quite similar are the conclusions to which we are led by an examination of Criseyde's portrait. Chaucer says of his heroine:

Criseyde mene was of hir stature,  
Therto of shap, of face, and eek of chere,  
Ther mighte been no fairer creature.  
And ofte tyme this was hir manere,  
To gon yressed with hir heres clere  
Down by hir coler at hir bak bihinde,  
Which with a threde of gold she wolde binde.

And, save hir browes joyneden yfere,  
Ther nas no lak, in ought I can espyen;  
But for to speken of hir eyen clere,  
Lo, trewely, they writen that hir syen,  
That Paradys stood formed in hir yen.  
And with hir riche beautee evermore  
Strof love in hir, ay which of hem was more.

She sobre was, eek simple, and wys withal,  
The beste ynorished eek that mighte be,  
And goodly of hir speche in general,  
Charitable, estatliche, lusty, and free;  
Ne nevermo ne lakkede hir pitee;  
Tendre herted, slydinge of corage;  
But trewely, I can not telle hir age.

[V, 806-26.]

We may notice first of all the contradiction in the first line, which describes Criseyde as of medium stature, with the statement earlier in the poem that "She nas not with the leste of hir stature" (I, 281),

<sup>1</sup> Cf. "cerebro calido, inpatientem" of Dares.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Boccaccio's "siccome si ragiona," or, as the Paris edition has it, "come Omer ragiona."

a statement based on Boccaccio's "Ell' era grande" (*Fil.*, I, 27). This trait of medium stature is due, as we shall see, to the series of portraits which begins with the prose Dares.

Dares says of Briseida:

Briseidam formosam, *non alta statura*, candidam, capillo flavo et molli, *superciliis iunctis*, *oculis venustis*, corpore aequali, blandam, affabilem, verecundam, animo *simplici*, *piam*. [Cap. 13.]

In the French of Benoit we read:

Briseïda fu avenant:  
*Ne fu petite ne trop grant.*  
 Plus esteit bele e bloie e blanche  
 Que flor de lis ne neif sor branche;  
*Mais les sorcilles li joigneient,*  
*Que auques li mesaveneient.*  
*Beaus ieuz aveit de grant maniere*  
*E mout esteit bele parliere.*  
 Mout fu de bon afaitement  
 E de *sage* contenement.  
 Mout fu amee e mout amot,  
*Mais sis corages li chanjot;*  
 E si ert el mout vergondose,  
*Simple e aumosniere e pitose.*

[5275-88]

In the Latin of Guido this becomes:

Briseida autem filia calcas multa fuit speciositate decora, *nec longa nec brevis* nec nimium macilenta, lacteo perfusa candore, genis roseis, *flavis crinibus*, *sed superciliis iunctis*, quorum iunctura dum multa pilositate tumesceret *modicam inconuenientiam presentabat*, *oculis venusta*. *Multa fulgebat loquale facundia*, multa fuit *pietate* tractabilis. Multos traxit propter illecebras amatores multosque dilexit dum suis amatoribus animi constantiam non seruasset. [Sig. e 2, recto, col. 2.]

These accounts all agree that Briseida was beautiful, that she was of medium height, that her eyebrows joined, that she had lovely eyes, that she was a good talker, and that she was full of pity; and all these traits are included in Chaucer's extended portrait. Dares and Benoit add the qualities of simplicity and modesty. Benoit alone says that she was of "sage contenement" (Chaucer's "wys withal"), and tells us that "sis corages li chanjot," which seems to be the source of Chaucer's "slydinge of corage," though Guido's "animi

constantiam non seruasset" conveys the same idea. But these accounts leave much of the Chaucerian portrait unexplained. Some of the hitherto unexplained details are due to the description of Briseis in Joseph of Exeter:

BRISEIS: *In medium librata statum* briseis heriles  
 Promit in aspectum uultus, nodatur in equos  
 Flaucies crinita sinus, umbreque minoris  
 Delicias oculus iunctos suspendit in arcus.  
*Diuiciis forme certant insignia morum:*  
*Sobria simplicitas, comis pudor, arida numquam*  
*Poscenti pietas, et fandi gracia lenis.*

[IV, 156-62.]<sup>1</sup>

So ingenious is the Exonian in the rhetorical turns of his phrasing that the reader may not be sorry to have the lines translated:

Balanced in medium stature, Briseis sets forth to view her lordly features. Her hairy yellowness is knotted into equal folds, and her eye lifts into joined arches the delights of lesser shadow [i.e., the lady's eyebrows].<sup>2</sup> With the riches of her form strive the marks of character: sober simplicity, a pleasing modesty, a pity never arid for him who asks, and gentle grace of speech.

That Chaucer has drawn on this portrait by Joseph of Exeter no one can doubt. The phrase "In medium librata statum" is nearer than any of the equivalent statements in the other portraits to Chaucer's "mene . . . of hir stature." "Sobria simplicitas" accounts for the words "She sobre was, eek simple." "Arida numquam poscenti pietas" is echoed by "Ne nevermo ne lakkede hir pitee." Clearest of all is the dependence of Chaucer's "with hir riche beautee . . . Strof love in hir" on Joseph's "Diuiciis forme certant insignia morum," a line which, as we shall see presently, had in Chaucer's copy of the poem the corrupt reading, "insignia amorum." Though the method in which Criseyde dresses her "heres clere, Doun by hir coler at hir bak bihinde," is not that of the two folds into which Briseis knots her "hairy yellowness," the suggestion

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from the Westminster MS, which, however, reads in 157 *affectum* for *aspectum* (the reading of Digby), as does also the Delphin edition. In 158 the Delphin edition reads *Planities* for *Flaucies*, a clear case of misreading.

<sup>2</sup> The phrase beginning "umbreque minoris" is peculiarly obscure. The translation I have given was suggested by Dean Andrew F. West and concurred in by Professor David Magie, both of the Princeton Department of Classics. "Umbra minor" is apparently used of the eyebrow as opposed to the "umbra major" of the lady's hair. In support of this interpretation may be adduced Claudian, *Nupt. Honor. et Mar.*, 267: "Quam iuncto leviter sese discrimine confert Umbra supercilii!"

for this detail also may well be due to Joseph. At least, no other of the portraits deigns to concern itself with the lady's coiffure.<sup>1</sup> Joseph agrees with Dares, Benoit, and Guido in the trait of the joined brows; though he does not, like Benoit and Guido, suggest that this was in any way a "lak." Rather it is, as any Greek would have regarded it, a mark of beauty.<sup>2</sup> It is just possible that Chaucer, failing to understand the obscure phrase of Joseph, took the words "*umbrequé minoris delicias*" to mean "and for a shadow of less delight." The order of ideas and the context of the Chaucerian passage lend some color to this conjecture; but, in view of Benoit's specific statement that the joined brows "*auques li mesaveineient*," there is no need to impugn Chaucer's Latinity.

Chaucer's portrait of Criseyde, then, like his description of Diomedes, is a composite of Joseph and Benoit; though his own fancy has played freely over the whole. One striking phrase of Chaucer, for which we should expect a definite source, is, however, not accounted for—"That Paradys stood formed in hir yen." This is not unlike Boccaccio's "*Il viso aveva adorno di bellezza Celestiale*" (*Fil.*, I, 27), or "*La sua faccia fatta in paradiso*" (*Fil.*, IV, 100); but Chaucer specifically tells us that his statement is on the authority of those "that hir syen." This appeal to an eyewitness suggests at once that he is thinking of "Dares." But the prose Dares does not say more than "*oculis venustis*"; and Joseph is silent.<sup>3</sup> Benoit says, "*Beaus ieuz aveit de grant maniere*," and Guido, "*oculis venusta*."

Of Troilus, Chaucer writes:

And Troilus wel waxen was in highte,  
And complet formed by proporcoun  
So wel, that kinde it not amenden mighte;  
Yong, fresshe, strong, and hardy as lyoun;  
Trewe as steel in ech condicioun;  
On of the beste enteched creature,  
That is, or shal, whyl that the world may dure.

And certainly in storie it is yfounde,  
That Troilus was never unto no wight,

<sup>1</sup> See on this passage Young, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

<sup>2</sup> On the joined brows see Krapp, *Modern Language Notes*, XIX, 235, and Hamilton, *ibid.*, XX, 80.

<sup>3</sup> Dictys Cretensis, the other "eyewitness," does not mention Briseis.

As in his tyme, in no degree secunde  
 In durring don that longeth to a knight.  
 Al mighte a geaunt passen him of might,  
 His herte ay with the firste and with the beste  
 Stod paregal, to durre don that him leste.

[V, 827-40.]

In the prose Dares the portrait is a brief one:

Troilum magnum, pulcherrimum, pro aetate valentem, fortem, cupidum virtutis. [Cap. 12.]

In Benoit this is expanded into fifty-four lines, from which I shall quote only those which in any way resemble Chaucer:

Troilus fu beaus a merveille;  
 Chiere ot riant, face vermeille,  
 Cler vis apert, le front plenier:  
*Mout corint bien a chevalier.*  
 . . . . .  
 A merveille ert beaus chevaliers.  
 Jambes ot dreites, vous les piez,  
 Trestoz les membres bien tailliez.  
 . . . . .  
*Granz ert, mais bien li coveneit*  
*O la taille, que bone aveit.*  
 Jo ne cuit or si vaillant home  
 Ait jusque la ou terre asome,  
 . . . . .  
 Ne qui tant ait riche corage,  
 Ne tant coveit pris ne barnage.  
 Ne fu sorfaiz ne outrajos,  
 Mais *liez e gais e amors.*  
 . . . . .  
 Bachelers ert e *jovenceaus*  
 De ceus de Troie li plus beaus  
 E li plus proz, fors que sis frere  
 Hector, qui fu dreiz emperere  
 E dreiz sire d' armes portanz.

[5393-5440.]

Guido's description also I shall reproduce only in part:

Troilus vero licet multum fuerit *corpore magnus*, magis tamen fuit corde magnanimus. . . . . In viribus vero & strennuitate bellandi vel fuit alius hector vel secundus ab ipso. *In toto etiam regno troie iuuenis nullus fuit tantis viribus nec tanta audacia gloriosus.* [Sig. e 2, verso, col. 1-2.]

In Joseph of Exeter, Troilus is thus described:

TROILUS: Troilus in spacium surgentes explicat artus  
*Mente gigas, etate puer, nullique secundus*  
*Audendo uirtutis opus: mixtoque uigore*  
 Grator illustres insignit gloria uultus.

[IV, 60-64.]<sup>1</sup>

On none of these accounts of Troilus has Chaucer drawn very heavily. Some of the details seem due to Benoit. From Joseph's "nullique secundus Audendo uirtutis opus" is clearly taken Chaucer's "in no degree secounde In durring don that longeth to a knight." It is to be noticed that Chaucer does not admit, with Benoit and Guido, that Troilus was second to Hector.<sup>2</sup> From Joseph's "mente gigas" came, apparently, the suggestion for Chaucer's "Al mighte a geaunt passen him of might."

No one, I think, who has examined the parallel passages cited above, will doubt that Chaucer knew Joseph's poem and used it for his Trojan portraits. If any further proof is needed, it is furnished by the fact that in two of the manuscripts of *Troilus* lines from the Latin poem are written beside the stanzas which we have been considering. The manuscripts are Cambridge University Library, Gg. 4. 27 (Gg), and St. John's College, Cambridge, L. 1 (J); and in each case the quotation is written by the original scribe.<sup>3</sup>

In Gg, between ll. 819 and 820 of the fifth book, we find:

*Versus* Sobria simplicitas sonus pudor arida numquam  
*Versus* Poscente poetas gracia fandi lenis;

and between ll. 826 and 827:

*Versus* Troilus in spacium surgentes explicat artus  
*Versus* Mente gigas etate puer mixtoque uigore  
*Versus* Nullique secundus audendo uirtutis opis.

These lines, which the scribe has so painstakingly labeled for us as "Versus," are a sadly bungled version of ll. 161, 162, and 60-63 of Joseph's fourth book, already quoted above.

<sup>1</sup> Again I quote from the Westminster MS. In 60, Digby reads *armos* for *artus*. The lines may be translated thus: "Troilus in bulk extends his rising limbs, in mind a giant, in age a boy, and second to none in daring valor's deed; and with tempered vigor a more pleasing glory marks his splendid features."

<sup>2</sup> See, however, *Troilus*, II, 158: "The wyse worthy Ector the secounde."

<sup>3</sup> The quotations are given in the Chaucer Society's print of Gg; in the print of J they are silently omitted.



In J the quotations are fuller, and distinctly less corrupt. In the margin of stanza 115 (V, 799-805), which describes Diomedes, the scribe has written:

Voce ferox *animo preceps*  
 audentique ira. *Validos*  
*quadratur in artus tetides*  
*pleniusque meretur tidea factis*  
*sic animo sic ore fero sic et cetera*  
 Calidonus heres.

We have here a fairly accurate text of IV, 124-27, of Joseph's poem. The words "Calidonus heres" are not, however, part of the quotation, which is marked as finished by the "et cetera"; and I am at a loss to explain their origin. Diomedes is called "Calydonius heros" in IV, 349; and possibly "heres" is a misreading of "heros." It is to be noted that the words "Calidonus heres" stand in the margin beside Chaucer's line, "And heir he was of Calidoyne and arge."

In the margin of stanza 116 (V, 806-12) is written:

In medium *librata*  
*statum Criseis he*  
*riles promit in affec*  
*tum vultus nodatur*  
*in equos flauicies*  
*crinata.*

These are Joseph's lines, IV, 156, 157, and part of 158. It is to be noted that the heroine's name is Criseis instead of Briseis. The change of initial, however, is probably to be explained as a scribal variation, which has taken place under the influence of the English poem after the Latin lines were first copied into the margin of J's ancestor. The reading *affectum* for *aspectum*, found also in the Westminster MS, doubtless goes back to the manuscript from which the quotation was originally copied. The word *sinus*, indispensable to the sense, is omitted after *crinata*, itself a corruption of *crinita*.

In the margin of stanza 117 (V, 813-19) is written:

Vmbraque minoris  
 dilicias *oculus iunc*  
*tos suspendit in*  
*arcus*  
 diuicijs forme *cer*  
 tant insigne *amorum.*

These are lines IV, 158–60, of Joseph's poem. The line-space between *arcus* and *diuicijs* brings the last sentence directly beside the last two lines of Chaucer's stanza, which are based on it. Note the reading *amorum* for *morum*. The corrupt reading clearly stood in Chaucer's copy of Joseph; for, had he had the correct reading before him, he would hardly have failed to preserve the more effective antithesis, which sets character over against beauty.

Beside stanza 118 (V, 820–26) is written:

Sobria simplicitas  
comis pudor ari  
da numquam / poscenti  
pietas gracia fandi lenis.

This is IV, 161, 162, of Joseph's "Dares." Note that J agrees with Gg in omitting *et* before *gracia*, though it avoids the other errors into which Gg has fallen.

In the margin of stanza 119 (V, 827–33) is written:

Troilus in spacium  
surgentes expli  
cat arcus

Mente gigas eta  
te puer. mixtoque  
vigore,

and in the margin of stanza 120 (V, 834–40):

Nullique secundus  
virtutis opis.

These are lines IV, 60–63, in Joseph; but the word *audendo*, found in Gg, is omitted before *virtutis*. This word, represented in Chaucer by "durring don," must have been present in Chaucer's copy. It may be only a coincidence that in one of the Bodleian manuscripts of *Troilus*, Selden B 24, fol. 103a, "durring don" is glossed "audendo." As an error of Chaucer's copy of Joseph must be regarded the transposition of the phrase *mixtoque vigore*, since this corruption is found both in J and in Gg.

We must now ask how these quotations found their way into the pages of these two manuscripts, and in particular whether their presence may be due to Chaucer himself. In a recent volume of the Chaucer Society's publications on the *Textual Tradition of*

*Chaucer's Troilus*, I have shown that in the later books J and Gg are both derived from a copy of the poem which had not received the revisions and alterations incorporated in the great majority of the manuscripts, a copy, moreover, which was apparently in the poet's own possession. They are not, however, related by descent from any common ancestor nearer than this "archetype" manuscript. Barring the ever-present possibility of contamination, the presence of the quotations in J and Gg would, therefore, indicate their presence in this archetype.<sup>1</sup> Considerations of general probability, also, favor the assumption that the quotations are due to Chaucer himself. If not due to him, they must come from some mediaeval "source-hunter," who recognized Chaucer's not very extensive debt to an obscure Latin poem, and took the trouble to record his discovery in the margin of his own copy.<sup>2</sup> Such a hypothesis does not explain the presence of the quotations both in J and in Gg. Finally, it may be noted that, as already shown above, Chaucer's copy of Joseph of Exeter contained in IV, 160, the false reading *amorum* for *morum*, and that this reading was also present in the manuscript of Joseph from which the marginal quotations were derived.

In such a question as this, fortunately not a vital one, certainty of answer is impossible. It seems most probable, however, that the quotations are due to Chaucer himself. Just why he should have written them in, one cannot say.<sup>3</sup>

### III. CHAUCER'S CATALOGUE OF TREES

The only other instance I have discovered of Chaucer's use of Joseph of Exeter is in the *Parliament of Fowls*, where, in his description of the garden, Chaucer devotes a stanza to an enumeration of the various trees which shaded that "blisful place":

The bilder ook, and eek the hardy asshe;  
The piler elm, the cofre unto careyne;  
The boxtree piper; holm to whippes lasshe;

<sup>1</sup> The quotations are not found in the Phillipps MS nor in Harleian 1239, both of which normally give in Books IV and V the unrevised "alpha" text of the poem.

<sup>2</sup> One of the *Troilus* manuscripts, Harleian 2392, contains a running commentary in the margin, supplied by some mediaeval editor. The comments include now and then references to Ovid, with book and line indicated (see *The MSS of Chaucer's Troilus*, Chaucer Society, 1914, Plate XV); but the notes, though displaying some taste and learning, are of a very obvious character.

<sup>3</sup> They are analogous to the Latin lines giving the argument of Statius' *Thebais* found between ll. 1498 and 1499 of Book V in all *Troilus* manuscripts save Rawlinson Poet. 163 and Harleian 2392.

The sayling firr; the cipres, deth to pleyne;  
 The sheter ew, the asp for shaftes pleyne;  
 The olyve of pees, and eek the drunken vyne,  
 The victor palm, the laurer to devyne.

[176-82.]

Some of the epithets which Chaucer applies to the various trees seem to have been suggested by a similar passage in the first book of Joseph's *Iliad*, where the poet is describing the beauties of Mt. Ida:

Haut procul incumbens urbi mediantibus aruis  
 Ydeus consurgit apex, uerus incola montis  
 Silua uiret, uernat abies procera, *cupressus*  
*Flebilis*, *interpres laurus*, uaga pinus, *oliua*  
*Concilians*, cornus uenatrix, *fraxinus audax*,  
 Stat comitis paciens ulmus, nunquamque senescens  
*Cantatrix buxus*, paulo procliuius aruum  
*Ebria uitis* habet, et dedinata latere  
 Cancicolum poscit phebum.

[I, 505-13.]<sup>1</sup>

In the *Knight's Tale* (A 2920-24) Chaucer has another catalogue of trees, which includes an even greater number of species; but the trees are not, as here, epithetized. Nor does the list of trees in the *Roman de la Rose* (1338-68; Chaucerian translation 1355-86) bear any similarity to that of the *Parliament of Fowls* beyond the fact that some of the trees in the two lists inevitably coincide.<sup>2</sup> The essential feature of the two lists just quoted is that each tree is briefly characterized by a word or phrase. For a list of trees so characterized the ultimate source is a passage in Ovid<sup>3</sup> (*Met.* x. 86-108); but, as Skeat has pointed out,<sup>4</sup> other similar lists are found in Seneca (*Oedipus* 532-41), Lucan (*Pharsalia* iii. 440-45), Statius (*Thebais* vi. 91-99), and Claudian (*De raptu Proserpinae* ii. 105-11). Primarily based on Statius, though indebted also to Ovid, is the tree-list in Boccaccio's *Teseide* (XI, 22-24). These passages are so readily accessible that there is no need to quote them in full. It will better serve the purposes of this discussion to take each of Chaucer's thirteen trees in order, and to see how far the epithets which he applies agree with those in the several lists just cited. When an epithet in one of these possible sources is like Chaucer's, the quotation is

<sup>1</sup> I quote from Jusserand's print of the Paris MS (p. 133). In 506 the Delphin edition reads *vetus* for *uerus*. In 513 *Cancicolum* should probably be emended to *Cancricolum*. The word is glossed in the Paris MS as equivalent to *feruentem*. The Delphin edition reads *Canicolum*.

<sup>2</sup> See D. S. Fansler, *Chaucer and the Roman de la Rose*, New York, 1914, pp. 113, 114.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. also Virgil, *Aeneid* vi. 179-82.

<sup>4</sup> Oxford Chaucer, I, 511, 512.

printed in italics. When no quotation from a given author is found, it will be understood that the tree in question does not appear in his list.

1. "The bilder ook." Ovid: "*frondibus aesculus altis*"; Seneca: "*curvosque tendit quercus et putres situ annosa ramos*"; Lucan: "*robore denso*"; Statius: "*situ non expugnabile robur*"; Claudian: "*quercus amica Iovi*." Chaucer's epithet seems to be original.

2. "The hardy asshe." Ovid: "*fraxinus utilis hastis*"; Lucan: "*procumbunt orni*"; Statius: "*infandos belli potura cruores fraxinus*"; Joseph: "*fraxinus audax*"; Boccaccio: "*i frassini ch' e' vani sanguì ber soglion de' combattimenti*."

3. "The piler elm, the cofre unto careyne." Ovid: "*amictae vitibus ulmi*"; Statius: "*nec inhospita vitibus ulmus*"; Claudian: "*Pampinus induit ulmus*"; Joseph: "*comitis paciens ulmus*"; Boccaccio: "*l' olmo che di viti s' innamora*." Chaucer's "piler elm" may be intended to suggest its support of the vine, the idea contained in all the other epithets; the rest of his phrase has no parallel.

4. "The boxtree piper." Ovid: "*perpetuoque virens buxum*"; Claudian: "*denso crispata cacumine buxus*"; Joseph: "*nunquamque senescens cantatrix buxus*."

5. "Holm to whippes lasshe." Ovid: "*cirrataque glandibus ilex*"; Lucan: "*nodosa inpellitur ilex*"; Statius: "*iliceaeque trabes*"; Claudian: "*ilex plena favis*"; Boccaccio: "*e gl' ilici soprani*." Chaucer's phrase has no parallel.

6. "The sayling firr." Ovid: "*enodisque abies*"; Statius: "*audax abies*"; Claudian: "*apta fretis abies*"; Joseph: "*abies procera*"; Boccaccio: "*l'audace abete*." Claudian is the only one to parallel Chaucer's epithet for the fir; but similar phrases are used of the alder: Seneca: "*per immensum mare motura remos alnus*"; Lucan: "*fluctibus aptior alnus*"; Statius: "*alnus amica fretis*." Joseph has the phrase "*vaga pinus*"; and the pine is near cousin to the fir.

7. "The cipres, deth to pleyne." Ovid: "*metas imitata cupressus*"; Seneca: "*cupressus altis exerens silvis caput virente semper alligat trunco nemus*"; Lucan: "*non plebeios luctus testata cupressus*"; Statius: "*brumaeque inlaesa cupressus*"; Claudian: "*tumulos tectura cupressus*"; Joseph: "*cupressus flebilis*"; Boccaccio: "*e l'*

durante cipresso ad ogni bruma." Chaucer is slightly nearer to Joseph than to either Lucan or Claudian.

8. "The sheter ew." Statius: "metuendaque suco taxus"; Boccaccio: "e 'l tasso, li cui sughi nocimenti soglion donare." Chaucer is quite independent.

9. "The asp for shaftes pleyne." The aspen appears in no other list; but compare Ovid's "fraxinus utilis hastis."

10. "The olyve of pees." Joseph: "*oliua concilians*." The olive does not appear in the other lists.

11. "The drunken vyne." Ovid: "pampineae vites"; Joseph: "*ebria uitis*." In the other lists the vine is mentioned only in connection with the elm.

12. "The victor palm." Ovid: "*lentae, victoris praemia, palmae*"; Boccaccio: "*d'ogni vincitore premio la palma*."

13. "The laurer to devyne." Ovid: "*innuba laurus*"; Seneca: "*amara bacas laurus*"; Claudian: "*venturi praescia laurus*"; Joseph: "*interpretis laurus*."

When one looks over the evidence just tabulated, he is struck first of all with the extraordinary lack of correspondence between Chaucer's characterizations and those of most of the other lists. To Seneca and to Statius Chaucer owes nothing at all. With Ovid there is but one agreement (No. 12), and there Boccaccio furnishes an alternative parallel—the only parallel, it is to be noted, between Chaucer's list and the Italian. In one instance (No. 6) Chaucer agrees with Claudian alone, unless Joseph's "vaga pinus" is admitted as a parallel; in another (No. 13), with Claudian and Joseph; in still another (No. 7), with Claudian, Lucan, and Joseph. For five of Chaucer's thirteen characterizations (Nos. 1, 3, 5, 8, 9) there is no parallel in any of the lists. In view of these facts it is the more striking that in six of the thirteen (Nos. 2, 4, 7, 10, 11, 13) Chaucer's descriptive phrase is in accord with Joseph's, and that in four of these instances (Nos. 2, 4, 10, 11) Joseph furnishes the only parallel.

We are, of course, dealing in many of these characterizations with widely current commonplaces. The association of the olive with peace, or of the palm with victory, needs no specific attribution of source. Hardly less common is the connection of the cypress with death or of the laurel with divination. But other things than pipes

are made of box-wood; and the vine, one must hope, is not invariably drunken.<sup>1</sup> Statius, and Boccaccio following him, choose the fir rather than the ash for the epithet "audax." Even though the agreements are in trite characterizations, the number of the agreements must give us pause. Ovid, for example, equally with Chaucer, gives a series of rather obvious characterizations; and yet there is but one place where the two coincide. Since Ovid names some twenty-five trees to Joseph's ten, in accordance with the theory of probability the agreements between Ovid and Chaucer should, if due to mere chance coincidence in the obvious, be more than twice as numerous as the agreements between Chaucer and Joseph. Finally, we may notice that, of Chaucer's possible sources, Joseph is the only one who uses a verbal noun of agent ("cantatrix buxus," "cornus venatrix") as characterizing epithet—a locution which Chaucer uses four times.

Were there no other evidence that Chaucer knew and used Joseph's poem, one might be skeptical as to the influence here; but with the certainty that the Trojan portraits owe much to Joseph, it seems at least probable that the agreements between the two tree-lists are not fortuitous.

The identification of Chaucer's "Dares" adds one more to the already long list of the poet's "bokes olde and newe." It does more than this; it shows us something of his methods of work. Not content with supplementing the *Filostrato* by details drawn from Benoit and Guido, he went back to what he may well have regarded as the primary source of all, the *Iliad* of "Dares Frigius." If the influence of Joseph on the catalogue of trees be admitted, it adds some slight confirmation to the opinion, now generally held, that the composition of *Troilus* is to be assigned to the years 1381-82 or thereabouts, the period already firmly established for the *Parliament of Fowls*.

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<sup>1</sup> Chaucer's opinion in the matter of prohibition may, perhaps, be gathered from the following words of Criseyde:

For though a man forbode dronkenesse,  
He nought forbet that every creature  
Be drinkeles for alwey, as I gesse.

[*Troilus*, II, 716-18.]